

# "48 ABSURD MEETINGS BETWEEN TUĐMAN AND MILOŠEVIĆ"

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**SAŽETAK:** *Zadnji predsjednik predsjedništva SFRJ Stjepan Mesić bio je ključni svjedok optužbe haškoga Tužiteljstva u slučaju Blaškić. Između ostaloga, on je svjedočio da su se predsjednici Tuđman i Milošević u Karađorđevu dogovorili o podjeli Bosne i Hercegovine. Ključni argument za Mesića da su se predsjednici Tuđman i Milošević dijelili Bosnu i Hercegovinu je podatak da su se sastali 48 puta. Autor analizira tih 48 „apsurdnih susreta“. Prije internacionalizacije jugoslavenske krize predsjednici Tuđman i Milošević susreli su se 13 puta; osim dva susreta ostali susreti bili su multilateralni. Poslije internacionalizacije jugoslavenske krize predsjednici Tuđman i Milošević susreli su se 35 puta u organizaciji međunarodnih posrednika; na 48 susreta na kojima su kako tvrdnji Mesića, Tuđman i Milošević „dijelili Bosnu“ na najmanje 31 susretu sudjelovao je i predsjednik Alija Izetbegović.*

**KLJUČNE RIJEČI:** Stjepan Mesić, podjela Bosne i Hercegovine, haški tribunal, krivokletnik

**ABSTRACT:** *The last president of the Presidency of Yugoslavia, Stjepan Mesic was a key witness for the ICTY Prosecution in the Blaskic case. Among other things, he testified that President Tudjman and Milosevic in Karadjordjevo agreed on the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A key argument for Mesic that the presidents Tudjman and Milosevic divided Bosnia and Herzegovina is the fact that they met 48 times. The author analyzes the 48 "absurd meetings". Before the internationalization of the Yugoslav crisis Presidents Tudjman and Milosevic met 13*

*times; except for two meetings other meetings were multilateral. After the internationalization of the Yugoslav crisis Presidents Tudjman and Milosevic met 35 times in the organization of international mediators; at 48 meetings at which according to Mesic, Tudjman and Milosevic "divided Bosnia" at least 31 meeting was also attended by President Alija Izetbegovic.*

**KEYWORDS:** Stjepan Mesic, a division of Bosnia and Herzegovina, ICTY, perjurer

## Introduction

One of the crucial figures, himself being the product of overall developments resulting from the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, but also one of the creators of wrong or false ideas about these developments, is Stjepan Mesić. Unlike others, he played a key role, because he appeared in The Hague as a key witness for the Prosecution in the General Blaškić case as early as 1998. His testimony, lacking intellectual and political depth, knowledge of the European context and the history of Yugoslavia, understanding of ethnic relations in the former Yugoslavia and awareness of the influence of international officials on the destiny of small nations, became a paradigm of the assessment of the official Croatian policy in the 1990s. Moreover, it served as a basis for all other indictments against Croatian officials and generals not only from Croatia, but also from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The testimony of Stjepan Mesić is the subject matter of this analysis. In it, we will not deal with indictments against the Croats in The Hague, we will not analyse political circumstances or activities of the Hague Tribunal or the Prosecutor as well as testimonies given by other witnesses or documents produced in the Court. Instead, we will focus on what Stjepan Mesić told investigators and in the courtroom and on what the Tribunal admitted into evidence, in order to verify its credibility.

**What** did Mesić testify **about** in the General Blaškić case before the Hague Tribunal, revealed Harmon, the Prosecutor, at the very beginning of his testimony: the meeting at Karađorđevo in 1991 where "the partition of Bosnia" was agreed on, the policy leading to the partition of Bosnia between Croatia and Serbia, the involvement of the Croatian Army in the war between the Croats and Bosnian Muslims, the Croatian *Banovina* as a platform aiming to annex parts of

Bosnia and Herzegovina, applicable Croatian laws tending to undercut Bosnian independence etc.

**What** Mesić did testify **about** in The Hague is not supported by facts and documents. It is a falsehood told in a manner which he perfected during his political career – consisting of falsifying facts, shifts in time when describing events in order to change their context and meaning, omissions of relevant data and facts, the inclusion of irrelevant data in his deposition, even of making up statements and events which did not happen, being silent on his own role or attaching importance to himself and assuming a role he did not have etc.

A falsehood is a euphemism for a lie. Since Stjepan Mesić testified under oath, each court, including the Hague Tribunal, should sanction false depositions on oath as perjury. However, this did not happen. Moreover, Mesić demanded to be a protected witness, so that his testimony would not be available to the public.

## **1. About the context of the meeting at Karađorđevo**

This is how Prosecutor M. Harmon announced Prosecution witness Stjepan Mesić before the Hague Tribunal in the General Blaškić case on 16 March 1998: "He will testify about President Tuđman's dual policy towards Bosnia, one which was a public policy of recognition of the independence of Bosnia, and a clandestine policy to divide Bosnia between Croatia and Serbia. He will testify in that regard about a meeting that took place in 1991 between Slobodan Milošević and President Tuđman at Karađorđevo, after which President Tuđman's clandestine policy to divide Bosnia was implemented."<sup>1</sup>

Before we start analysing the meeting at Karađorđevo and President Tuđman's policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina, we should warn about Mesić's testimony concerning the context of the meeting at Karađorđevo. What did he say about the context of the meeting between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević at Karađorđevo?

*"From the moment the formation of states in the former Yugoslavia began, they met for about 48 times. Imagine how absurd would that be, had Hitler and Churchill met so*

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<sup>1</sup> Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998.

*many times during the Second World War. Here, too, it was half-crazy: we waged defensive war, while the heads of the states held meetings.*<sup>2</sup>

Source: testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998

*"The reports would come to us second-hand, because it was not logical for us to be waging war against Slobodan Milošević while at the same time advising – receiving his adviser in Zagreb and discussing maps with her. Obviously, this had to be done in secret."*

Source: Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998

There are several pieces of disinformation in these two sentences. Firstly, there was nothing secret about it, because the media covered all meetings, and so they did this one as well:

*"OSIJEK, 10 April (Hina) – A group of Serbian and Croatian scholars and political experts, formed by the President of the Republic of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević, and the President of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, met today for the first time at Tikveš near Osijek. The group consists of academician Kosta Mihajlović, Smilja Avramov, Prof. Ph.D., Ratko Marković, Prof. Ph.D. and Vladan Kutlešić, Ph.D. as its Serbian members, and from academician Dušan Bilandžić, Smiljko Sokol, Prof. Ph.D., Zvonko Lerotić, Prof. Ph.D. and adviser to the President Josip Šentija as its Croatian members. At their first meeting, the group members started identifying problems and ways of resolving the Yugoslav political crisis and, especially, problems related to the Croat Serbian relations. It was concluded that the group would continue to work soon"*<sup>3</sup>.

Secondly, Mesić claimed that "it was not logical for us to be waging war against Slobodan Milošević" at the beginning of April 1991, while it was logical enough to insist on Mesić's appointment as President of the Presidency of the SFRY one month later, in May 1991, and to agree to his appointment in

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2 He repeated the comparison to Churchill and Hitler when testifying in The Hague, but he changed its context somewhat: "You do not have to make any assumptions. Read what Hrvoje Šarinić said. He said he met with Milošević 13 times during the war and they reviewed a wide range of issues. Can you imagine, during the Second World War, Churchill meeting with Hitler, or their chiefs of cabinets meeting and discussing political issues and doing that 13 times on the top of everything (Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998).

3 HINA, Baza Eva, 10 April 1991.

August 1991. Mesić's testimony consists mostly of such statements that insinuate, rather than analyse or interpret certain policy. Unfortunately, the format of this book prevents us from mentioning all of his disinformation of this kind.

*...both you and I watched in January 1994 meetings between representatives of Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks in Geneva, and when they were sitting around a map, Franjo Tuđman, Karadžić, Boban and Milošević were standing to the side and they were reviewing these maps, what would belong to whom without the Muslims.*

*I correct myself – only the Serbs and Croats were present, the Muslims were not there. This was in January 1994. This was broadcast on television. I was flabbergasted because I understood what this meant."*

Source: Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998.

**Question: Was that not part of the international negotiations, the bilateral talks within international frameworks?**

*Answer: Certainly, even the international community is not without blame. I am absolutely convinced that Lord Owen was endeavouring to break up Bosnia-Herzegovina and I do not think I forgive him. He is one of the culprits, too, that all this happened.*

Source: Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998.

Prosecutor M. Harmon was right when he asked for an explanation about the context of the meeting at Karađorđevo, so that one might understand what was discussed there and what was agreed on, if anything could have been agreed on at all. Mesić claimed that the Karađorđevo meeting was only one of 48 meetings between "the heads of the states" and that it was "absurd" and "half-crazy". According to Mesić's testimony, the absurd situation reached its climax at the beginning of 1994, when Milošević requested that Mesić be removed from office on the grounds that Tuđman "cannot reach any agreement with Milošević".

Since Mesić signed these statements of his in his deposition of 1997 and repeated them in The Hague courtroom in 1998, they are to be taken as his firm intention to convince the Hague Tribunal thereof. What is true about his testimony?

It is true that Presidents Tuđman and Miošević met 48 times but on different grounds and under different circumstances than Mesić claimed.

It is a fact that S. Mesić knew the exact number of meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević and that he judged them as half-crazy and absurd, i.e. that he would never attended them

According to Mesić, “the partition of Bosnia” was discussed at these meetings that were sponsored by the international community. Mesić is “absolutely convinced that Lord Owen was endeavouring to break up Bosnia and Herzegovina” and “I do not think I forgive him that”. Mesić believes that Lord Owen is “one of those who are to blame” implying that his plans for the constitutional order of Bosnia and Herzegovina were plans to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As Mesić himself emphasised, “I was for an integral Bosnia and Herzegovina”, which meant in political terminology of the time concerning the constitutional order, that Mesić advocated a unitary Bosnia and Herzegovina, or that for Mesić each discussion, programme or agreement about the federal or con-federal model of Bosnia and Herzegovina constituted “the partitioning of Bosnia”.

Mesić’s testimony about 48 meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević presents for the Prosecutor crucial evidence about continual efforts to reach an agreement “to divide Bosnia” , because, instead of waging war, these two kept on meeting and drawing maps about how to divide Bosnia. Neither the Prosecutor nor General Blaškić’s Defence required from the Prosecution witness Stjepan Mesić to give more detailed information about these 48 meetings: where and when they took place, who organised them, who attended them, what was discussed at meetings and so on. Had they done it, and they should have in the interest of the truth and justice, they could have revealed how Mesić manipulated both, the Prosecutor’s Office and the Hague Tribunal, as he testified in 1997 and 1998. The information about 48 meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević is (partly) true. In his statements, Mesić systematically put this information in the context of the following statement: “Imagine how absurd would that be, had Hitler and Churchill met so many times during the Second World War”.

He deliberately choose not to tell the full information about these meetings. He avoided telling the truth and

unscrupulously deceived about the importance of his role during international negotiations on the peaceful solution of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Prosecutor's Office wanted Mesić to be the key witness for the Prosecution because of high offices he held during his political career. It is, however, highly unlikely that even the Prosecutor's Office could have assumed that someone having no dignity, with no moral scruples and willing to tell lies and deceive even when testifying in court, might occupy such prominent positions as Mesić did.

An insight into the information about 48 meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević points to such conclusion already.

## **2. Review of 48 "absurd" meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević**

The table hereinbellow offers a review of "the 48 meetings" between Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman and Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević. Some historians or analysts of that period and the developments in question might disagree as to the number of the meetings. Such differences are possible depending on the methods and criteria applied when analysing the meetings.<sup>4</sup>

For example, President Francois Mitterand talked in Paris with Presidents Tuđman and Milošević (in Paris on 28 August 1991), but these were separate talks about the same topic. There are no records in the media that Presidents Tuđman and Milošević personally met. How "to regard" the negotiations in Dayton? As a single meeting or according to the number of meetings that were held during the negotiations?

All this is irrelevant for this analysis. According to the information available to the public, the number of meetings is identical to the one given by Mesić. Possible corrections to the information will not significantly modify a type of the meetings, reasons for them or the period when the meetings between the two Presidents took place. In order to provide objective indication as to the nature of the meetings, we used the reports by news agencies adding no comments.

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<sup>4</sup> The differences are possible because as criterion may be used a physical meeting itself, or a common statement or agreement made or reached during international negotiations without an actual meeting, but through go-betweens instead.

**REVIEW OF 48 MEETINGS BETWEEN PRESIDENTS TUĐMAN  
AND MILOŠEVIĆ**

N o	Date and place	Type of the meeting	Sponsor
1.	25 Jan 1991, Belgrade	Prior to the meeting of the federal SFRY Presidency, a meeting between the Croatian and Serbian delegations was held about the Yugoslav crisis; The Croatian side tried to avert a military coup prepared by the YPA. President Tudman: "We were on the verge of civil war. The army has mobilised. Croatia defended itself by way of democracy".	<i>Talks on the Future of Yugoslav ia  Serbia and the Republic of Croatia</i>
2.	30 Jan 1991, Belgrade	The second round of the YU-Summit. The talks on the political future of Yugoslavia resumed in Belgrade. Besides the members of the Yugoslav political leadership, the Presidents of all republics and provinces also attend the meeting of the Yugoslav Presidency. The representatives of Croatia and Slovenia required that the YPA's role in the resolution of the present political crisis in the country be considered. After a lengthy and, occasionally, painful discussion, the participants agreed that the inner Presidency would discuss the role and position of the YPA in the resolution of the crisis at its next meeting. (HINA)	<i>Talks on the Future of Yugoslav ia:  YU- Summit: Presiden ts of all republics</i>
3.	22 Feb 1991, Sarajevo	At the meeting between the Presidents of all Yugoslav republics in Sarajevo, Izetbegović presented the idea of "an asymmetrical federation": "Serbia and Montenegro would be in a classical	<i>Talks on the Future of Yugoslav</i>



		federation, Slovenia and Croatia in a confederation with the first two, while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia would be equally close and distant to all of them".	<i>ia: YU-Summit: Presidents of all republics</i>
4.	25 March 1991, Karadordev o	Hina: "Croatian President Franjo Tuđman and Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, met today in the border area between the two republics. During lengthy long talks on key issues relating to a political and economic crisis and the future relations in Yugoslavia, the Presidents considered the main issues to be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the republics' Presidents. Despite well known differences in opinions about the basic issues concerning the interests of Croatia and Serbia, i.e. of the Croatian and the Serbian peoples, both Presidents took into account that the relations between Croatia and Serbia are crucial for the overall relations between Yugoslav republics and, as such, for the solution to the political crisis in the SFRY. Therefore, their efforts were aimed at eliminating the options that might endanger the interests of the Croatian and Serbian peoples alike and at seeking permanent solutions that would guard the historic interests of peoples. The following was concluded:  - to determine the period for solving the existing Yugoslav problems of two months at longest, that will be submitted as a joint proposal at the forthcoming meeting of the republics' Presidents" (HINA, Baza EVA)	<i>Meeting between Presidents Milošević and Tuđman</i>

5.	28 March 1991  Villa Dalmatia. Split	<p>The first meeting of the presidents of the six Yugoslav republics about the resolution of the Yugoslav crisis is held in Villa Dalmatia in Split. HINA found out from unofficial sources that, after an introduction by Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman, who presented Croatia's proposal for the union of sovereign states or separation, all Presidents took part in a two-hour discussion which followed thereafter. Slovenia's President Milan Kučan put forward Slovenia's proposal for separation.</p> <p>Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević repeated his previous proposal that the Federal Executive Council should be dissolved in order to avert the economic collapse. (Hina)</p>	<i>Meeting between President s of Yugoslav republics</i>
6.	04 April 1991  Belgrade	The second meeting between the Presidents of the republics was held in Belgrade. Topics: Referendum and the manner of separation; Tuđman and Gligorov proposed a union of sovereign and independent States.	<i>Meeting between Presiden ts of Yugoslav republics</i>
7.	11 April 1991  Brdo near Kranj	The third presidential meeting was held at Brdo near Kranj (Slovenia). Topic: The elaboration of the separation model and the referendum. It was established that there are two opposing views thereon.	<i>Meeting between Presiden ts of Yugoslav republics</i>
8.	15 April 1991  Tikveš	“The President of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, and the President of the Republic of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević, met near the Croatian border to resume the talks on the relations between the two republics and to discuss the results of the work of joint expert teams.” (HINA)	<i>Meeting between President s Milošević and</i>

			<i>Tuđman</i>
9.	18 April 1991, Villa Biljana, Ohrid	The fourth meeting between the Presidents of Yugoslav republics was held at Villa Biljana at Ohrid (Macedonia). HINA: "With regard to the fact that, at the last meeting at Brdo near Kranj, the agreement was reached to hold in each republic a referendum on its future status by the end of May, it is expected that the Presidents will define propositions for such referendum. They will also discuss mutual rights and obligations of republics and in particular of each republic with regard to the existing federal state. Finally, the Presidents will also discuss the functioning of joint bodies during the transition period until they reach an agreement about new relations or until the complete separation": (HINA)	<i>Meeting between Presiden ts of Yugoslav republics</i>
10.	29 April 1991. <i>Plavi dvorac</i> Cetinje	The fifth presidential meeting was held at <i>Plavi dvorac</i> at Cetinje (Montenegro). Topic: Separation. Izetbegović and Gligorov announced their joint compromise proposal for the resolution of the Yugoslav crisis. The President of the Republic of Croatia left the press conference because of numerous insults from journalists who supported the creation of a "Great Serbia".	<i>Meeting between Presiden ts of Yugoslav republics</i>
11.	06 June 1991 Villa	Hina: "The sixth meeting between the Presidents of the Yugoslav republics or the Presidents of the Yugoslav republic Presidencies was held in Sarajevo	<i>Meeting between Presiden ts of</i>

	<p>Stojčevac Sarajevo</p>	<p>today. The participants of the meeting resumed considering the future Yugoslav system of government.</p> <p>They agreed on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All unsettled issues should be settled by mutual agreement in a peaceful and democratic manner and in the common interest. In doing so one should take into account the gravity of the economic and social crisis in Yugoslavia and the appeal by the European Community.</li> <li>The proposal by Presidents Alija Izetbegović and Kiro Gligorov constitutes a solid basis to resume talks on regulating the relations between the Yugoslav republics. This should be discussed in each republic together with other proposals submitted at the meeting.</li> <li>2. Since the troubled interethnic relations generate, among other things, the crisis in Yugoslavia, and since they manifest themselves in some republics in particular, it has been agreed to hold a special meeting soon between Presidents of Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.</li> <li>3. The participant hold the opinion that the Presidency should resolve a crisis, caused by the failure to elect the President and the Vice-president of the SFRY Presidency, in accordance with the Constitution and the Rules as soon as possible.</li> <li>4. The President agreed to intensify their working meetings.” (HINA)</li> </ol>	<p><i>Yugoslav republics</i></p>
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12.	12 June 1991 Split	<p>"In accordance with the resolution passed during the last week talks between the Presidents of the republics or the republic Presidencies, a meeting between the Presidents of Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Franjo Tuđman, Slobodan Milošević and Alija Izetbegović, was held in Split today...</p> <p>Since the proposals submitted at the Sarajevo meeting will be discussed in republics in the next few days, conditions will be met to define more quickly and precisely the elements needed to find a solution to the political and constitutional crisis, i.e. for just regulation of the relations between Yugoslav peoples and republics. The principle of national equality and the interests of all peoples should be taken as a starting point." At the meeting "...there was much talk about Bosnia and Herzegovina and the possibility of introducing a cantonal system in that republic" HINA, <i>Baza Eva</i>, 12 June 1991</p>	<i>Meeting between President s Tuđman, Milošević and Izetbegović</i>
13.	19 June 1991 Belgrade	The tripartite meeting of Split between Tuđman, Milošević and Izetbegović resumed in Belgrade. The topic of the meeting was keeping peace in the SFRY territory. Again, no agreement was reached.	<i>Meeting between President s Tuđman, Milošević and Izetbegović</i>
14.	28 Aug	French President Francois Mitterand	<i>Francois</i>

	1991 Paris	discussed in Paris the peaceful resolution of the Yugoslav crisis with Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman. The next day President Mitterand talked to Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević. (There is no information whether Presidents Tuđman and Milošević met)	<i>Mitteran d. F. Tuđman – S. Milošević</i>
15.	02 Sep 1991 Belgrade	The President of the SFRY Presidency, Stjepan Mesić, the President of the Federal Executive Council, Ante Marković, and the leaders of the six Yugoslav republics signed a Ceasefire Agreement and a Memorandum on Extending the EC Monitoring in Yugoslavia one hour after midnight	<i>President of the SFRY Presiden cy, Stjepan Mesić, President of the Federal Executive Council, Ante Marković and President s of the six Yugoslav republics</i>
16.	07 Sep 1991 The Hague	Hina: "Members of the SFRY Presidency, the Federal Government of the SFRY, the Presidents of all Yugoslav republics, the EC Council and representatives of the EC member states took part in the peace conference on Yugoslavia in The Hague."  "The peace conference ended by	<i>Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>

		<p>adopting a common statement that was signed by all parties. In it, the parties confirm that their common goal is "to achieve peace in Yugoslavia and to find a permanent solution that will be just and suit the legitimate interests and aspirations of all peoples".</p> <p>For that purpose, they decided "to set up an Arbitration Commission within the framework of the Conference... We promise to seek a peaceful solution based on the principles and obligations as agreed upon within the CESC. We are determined never to recognise a change of borders, unless this was done peacefully and by way of a mutual agreement".</p>	
17.	<p>17 Sep 1991</p> <p>Igalo, Montenegro</p>	<p>Hina: "The participants ... in the meeting with the Chairman of The Hague Conference on Yugoslavia, Lord Carrington, Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman, Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević and the Federal Secretary for the National Defence, General Veljko Kadijević, resumed the talks on the implementation of the agreement that was signed with Lord Carrington. They also agreed to secure an absolute ceasefire on 18 September 1991 at 12:00 ... According to the statement, the three of them agreed to immediately resume continuous talks in order to secure peace, so that they would contribute to the resolution of the Yugoslav political and constitutional crisis and the success of the Conference on Yugoslavia in The Hague."</p>	<p><i>Lord Carrington:</i> <i>Tuđman</i> – <i>Milošević</i> – <i>Kadijević</i></p>

18.	25 Sep 1991  Belgrade	<p>“As they resumed the talks about the resolution of the Yugoslav crisis, that started at Igalo, the President of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, the President of the Republic of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević, and the Federal Secretary for the National Defence, General Veljko Kadijević, arrived today at a joint conclusion, that it is necessary to maintain and secure peace in the country by way of a complete ceasefire, This is the first condition for finding just political solutions. They deemed that a political solution to the crisis is in the interest of all Yugoslav peoples and republics as a way of preventing bloodshed and conflicts. When resolving the crisis, one must take into account the interests of all Yugoslav peoples and their equal status. The meeting participants concluded that the guidelines of The Hague Conference, which exclude that political solutions be imposed by force, will contribute to a peaceful and just solution to the Yugoslav crisis.” HINA, Baza EVA, 25 September 1991</p>	<p><i>Lord Carrington:</i> <i>Tuđman</i> – <i>Milošević</i> – <i>Kadijević</i></p>
19	04 Oct 1991  The Hague	<p>During the Peace Conference on the SFRY, Lord Carrington organised a meeting between Presidents Tuđman, Milošević and General Kadijević in The Hague. It was agreed to lift the blockade of YPA's army barracks in Croatia, to end all armed conflicts and to withdraw the YPA's troops from Croatia.</p>	<p><i>Lord Carrington:</i> <i>Tuđman</i> – <i>Milošević</i> – <i>Kadijević</i></p>



20	10 Oct 1991  The Hague	At the meeting organised by Lord Carrington, Presidents Tuđman and Milošević and General Kadijević agreed that the YPA would pull out of the Republic of Croatia within 30 days.	<i>Lord Carrington: Tuđman – Milošević – Kadijević</i>
21	15 Oct 1991  Moscow	With Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev acting as intermediary, Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman and Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević signed a three-point memorandum ... Under the point one the signatories declared that it is "necessary to end all armed conflicts" in Yugoslavia. Under point two, the Serbian and Croatian Presidents must "within one-month period" start negotiating in order to settle all their disputes". These negotiations should be conducted "in the interest of the Yugoslav peoples" and should take into account the rights and the sovereignty of the republics to enable the establishment of good neighbourly relations and peace." Under point three, Milošević and Tuđman "asked from the USSR, the USA and the European Community to provide services in organising negotiations". (HINA, Baza EVA, 15 October 1991)	<i>M. Gorbachev: Tuđman - Milošević</i>
22	18 Oct 1991  The Hague	The Peace Conference on Yugoslavia was held in The Hague. "At the Conference, another ceasefire was agreed to. Franjo Tuđman and all members of the SFRY Presidency signed the relating document. Another document entitled Draft of the Resolution to the Yugoslav Crisis	<i>Peace Conference on Yugoslavia - all President</i>

		recognises the sovereignty off all Yugoslav republics... All Presidents of the Yugoslav republics, except Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, accepted the document. Milošević emphasised that the draft ignores the fact that Yugoslavia still existed. Everybody were surprised at the fact that President of Montenegro Momir Bulatović raised no objections to the draft. Moreover, he accepted it entirely.” (HINA, Baza Eva, 18 October 1991)	<i>s of the Yugoslav republics</i>
23	05 Nov 1991 The Hague	“The Peace Conference on Yugoslavia in The Hague broke up after the communist leader of Serbia refused to change his views on the peace plan presented by the European Community”, reported US UPI agency. “Some 9,7 million of inhabitants of the greatest Yugoslav republic are now facing a threat of diplomatic and economic sanctions. The only outcome of the meeting that broke up after an hour is an agreement on a new ceasefire” (HINA, Baza Eva, 5 November 1991).	<i>Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>
24	23 Nov 1991 Geneva	“Presidents Milošević and Tuđman and General Kadijević signed in Geneva this evening an agreement on the peace implementation in Yugoslavia and the preparations for the deployment of UN troops, Vance said (Cyrus Vance, a special envoy of the UN General Secretary). According to France Press, the agreement calls for an immediate lift of the blockade of all federal army barracks in Croatia as well as the withdrawal of the federal army from that republic and a ceasefire that is to take effect the following day. Both sides are bounded by the agreement to facilitate the provision of humanitarian	<i>Cyrus Vance, a special envoy of the UN General Secretary , Franjo Tuđman, Slobodan Milošević YPA</i>

		aid to victims of the armed conflict. Vance said that the details about the mandate, organisation and regions where UN troops are to be deployed had already been discussed. Both Presidents are of the opinion that this should happen "as soon as possible". (HINA, Baza Eva, 23 November 1991)	<i>General Veljko Kadijević</i>
25	09 Jan 1992 Bruxelles	In the resumption of the Peace Conference in Bruxelles, a conclusion was reached that the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia is a <i>fait accompli</i> . While trying to postpone the decision on the recognition, Slobodan Milošević requested that the Peace Conference on Yugoslavia be transferred to the UN.	<i>Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>
26	25 June 1992 Strasbourg	"The Chairman of the EC Conference on Yugoslavia, Lord Peter Carrington, said after today's talks with Presidents of Croatia and Serbia and the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina that he was "disappointed" with the results of his efforts to revive the peace process. Slobodan Milošević said that the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina depended on the new Yugoslav federation consisting of Serbia and Montenegro. He added that the three ethnic groups in Bosnia should first achieve consensus about the structure of the republic. "I hoped to hear from President Milošević today that he and Serbia are ready to recognise the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign and independent state." (HINA, Baza Eva, 25 June 1992).	<i>Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>

27 .	26/27 Aug 1992  London	The International Peace Conference on Yugoslavia was held in London on 26 & 27 August. Representatives of over thirty countries and organisations, Presidents of Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, the President of Yugoslavia, Dobrica Ćosić, and Prime Minister Milan Panić took part in the Conference. Lord David Owen and Cyrus Vance were appointed Co-chairmen of the Conference. Conference bodies that will operate in Geneva were also set up. A special resolution on Bosnia and Herzegovina was adopted. The declaration on Serbian aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina was not adopted because the Yugoslav delegation was against it.	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>
28 .	29 Sep 1992  Geneva	29 September: A new round of Geneva talks started. Alija Izetbegović will attend them for the first time. Presidents Tudman and Ćosić signed a joint statement condemning all actions related to ethnic cleansing.	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>
29 .	10-12 Jan 1993  Geneva	The peace talks resumed in Geneva. They are widely regarded as “the last chance” for peace. For the first time Serbian President Milošević showed up in Geneva where he managed to persuade the Bosnian Serbs to accept the proposed constitutional solutions for Bosnia and Herzegovina on 12 January.	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>
30 .	23 Jan 1993  Geneva	23/30 January: The Geneva talks, which began on 23 January, broke up on 30 January after the Serbs and Muslims refused to sign the crucial parts of the peace plan. Vance and Owen left for New York to seek support of the UN	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen</i>

		Security Council.	<i>ce on Yugoslav ia</i>
31 .	01-02 May 1993  Athens	<p>The International Peace Conference on the Resolution of the Crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina was held in Athens. Besides its host, Greek Prime Minister Constantin Mitsotakis, the Conference was attended by Presidents Franjo Tuđman, Dobrica Ćosić, Slobodan Milošević, and Momir Bulatović and the leaders of the three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Radovan Karadžić, Mate Boban and Alija Izetbegović.</p> <p>The newly appointed Conference Co-chairman, Thorwald Stoltenberg, and American and Russian envoys Reginald Bartholomew and Vitalij Ćurkin joined David Owen and Cyrus Vance who opened the Conference. At the end of the meeting, Radovan Karadžić signed the Vance-Owen peace plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina under condition that "the Assembly of the Republic of Srbska confirms at its meeting on 5 May the decision of its delegation that has been taken here in Athens on 2 May 1993."</p>	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>
32 .	16 June 1993  Geneva	The first round of new talks about the resolution of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was attended by Presidents Alija Izetbegović, Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman started in Geneva. Presidents Tuđman and Milošević reached during the Geneva meeting an agreement about the principles to organise Bosnia and Herzegovina either as federal or con-federal state while respecting the	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>

		interests of the three constituent nations.	
33 .	23 June 1993  Geneva	The talks on the resolution of the crisis in the Bosnia and Herzegovina resumed. Besides the Conference Co-chairmen, Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević, Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman and seven members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, take part in them. Alija Izetbegović and Ejup Ganić do not attend them. The nine-point Constitutional Proposal for Con-federation was put forward during the talks. The seven members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina were introduced to the Proposal.	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>
34 .	17 July 1993  Geneva	At the meeting of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia in Geneva, Presidents Tuđman and Milošević made, in co-operation with the Conference Co-chairmen, a statement by way of which they denied that there were plans to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina between the Croats and Serbs. The statement also says that "the only way to achieve permanent peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to recognise the interests of all three of its constituent peoples and to reach an agreement to establish the three republics within a con-federation".	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>
35 .	27 July 1993  Geneva	The new decisive round of the talks starts in Geneva. It is attended by the leaders of the tree warring sides, Radovan Karadžić, Alija Izetbegović and Mate Boban, the Presidents of Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia, Milošević, Bulatović and Tuđman, and the interational intermediaries, Owen and Stoltenberg. The Serbs and Croats supported a proposal by the	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>

		intermediaries to form a new "Union", an association of the three ethnic republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina.	
36 .	30 July 1993  Geneva	During the Geneva talks, all three parties accepted a compromise proposal by international intermediaries Owen and Stoltenberg concerning the system of government of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a union of three constituent republics. Borders between the three republics will be established later. Izetbegović agreed to the constitutional proposal for the union of republics, but it is to be approved by the parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The talks focused on the maps again. Military leaders of the three sides signed a ceasefire on all frontlines in Sarajevo.	<i>International Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>
37 .	04 Aug 1993  Geneva	The Co-chairmen of the International Conference on the former Yugo-slavia, Lord David Owen and Thorwald Stoltenberg, met at the Palace of Nations with Presidents Franjo Tuđman, Slobodan Milošević and Momir Bulatović. Mate Boban and Radovan Karadžić also attended the meeting. The President of the Presidency of the Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović, did not come. He sent a message to Owen and Stoltenberg: "I can attend the talks only if the Serbs withdraw from Bjelašnica". (HINA, Baza EVA, 4 August 1993)	<i>International Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>
38 .	20 Aug 1993  Geneva	In order to bring the talks on the maps to an end, the international intermediaries called the Presidents of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro to Geneva to encourage all sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina to accept what has been proposed. UPI/Hina: "The leaders	<i>International Peace Conference on Yugoslav</i>

		of the warring sides met in Geneva to start the crucial part of the negotiations about Bosnia and Herzegovina.” The US agency also reported that Conference Co-charimen Owen and Stoltenberg met during the morning with all negotiating parties separately, although they did not try very hard to gather all negotiators at the same table. The yesterday’s discussion about the maps produced no results so that this issue will be discussed again. Lord Owen expressed hope that the negotiating parties would be more flexible than they were during previous days. (HINA, Baza EVA, 20 August 1993)	<i>ia</i>
39	31 Aug 1993 Geneva	The Co-chairmen of the International Peace Conference on the Former Yugoslavia met in Geneva with Presidents Tuđman, Milošević, Bulatović and Izetbegović. Conference diplomats and officials informed that the three sides from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia’s President Milošević and Croatia’s President Tuđman did not met directly in the forenoon. Bilateral talks which David Owen and Thorwald Stoltenberg conducted this morning were about the maps of the three future ethnic republics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Reuter/AFP/Hina: “As reported from Geneva, Alija Izetbegović, President of the Presidency of the Bosnia and Herzegovina, said today to the international peace intermediaries that he could not accept a peace plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina based on	<i>Internati onal Peace Conferen ce on Yugoslav ia</i>



		compromise without considerable changes of the proposed map showing a division of the country. The reports also say that due to the practical rejection of the plan, the intermediaries tried to persuade leader of the Bosnian Serbs Radovan Karadžić to make some territorial concessions in accordance with Muslim demands. Muslim officials added that Izetbegović insisted on additional 6% of the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Muslim republic in Bosnia and Herzegovina." (HINA, Baza Eva, 31 Aug 1993)	
40 .	20 Sep 1993  British Aircraft carrier Invincible	British aircraft carrier Invincible. The following attended the talks at the British aircraft carrier: Radovan Karadžić, Mate Boban, Alija Izetbegović and Presidents Franjo Tuđman, Slobodan Milošević and Momir Bulatović, Conference Co-chairmen David Owen and Thorwald Stoltenberg and the representatives of the USA and Russia, Charles Redman and Vitalij Čurkin. The purpose of the meeting was to accept a peace plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina. There was not much progress during the negotiations, because the Muslims still insisted on Neum, although Metković and Ploče were mentioned more than once. Izetbegović said that it was up to the parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take a final decision.	<i>International Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>
41 .	29-30 Nov 1993  Geneva	The European Union organised in Geneva a new round of talks about peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Besides the twelve EU Ministers of	<i>International Peace</i>

		<p>Foreign Affairs, the following also attended the meeting: the leaders of the three sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Karadžić, Boban and Izetbegović, Croatia's President Tuđman, the Presidents of Serbia and Montenegro, diplomatic representatives of Russia and the USA, the Co-chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Thorvald Stoltenberg and David Owen. The Geneva talks on Bosnia were followed by a meeting between the Serbs and Muslims. DPA reported that Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević, the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadžić, the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović, and peace intermediaries Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg participated in the talks. In the evening on 29 November, talks were held between the Serbs and Croats. After a two-month break these were the first official talks within the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.</p>	<p><i>Conference on Yugoslavia</i></p>
42	<p>21-23 Dec 1993</p> <p>Geneva</p>	<p>The Presidents of Serbia and Croatia, Milošević and Tuđman, and the representatives of the three warring sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Karadžić, Boban and Izetbegović participated in the Peace Conference in Geneva. The participants agreed about the territorial concession to the Muslims, i.e. the Muslim republic should have 33% of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Muslim side agreed to it. However, they made objections with regard to the "quality of the territory offered to them"; in their view some towns were still questionable as well as the access to the</p>	<p><i>International Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i></p>

		sea and the Sava river for the Muslims and the status of Sarajevo. All three sides agreed to end the conflict during the Christmas or until 15 January 1994.	
43	22 Dec 1993  Bruxelles	EU Ministers and the Co-chairmen of the international Peace Conference on the Former Yugoslavia met with Presidents Tuđman, Bulatović, Milošević and Izetbegović as well as with Karadžić and Boban. The EU Ministers requested for the Muslim Republic in the Bosnia and Herzegovina at least 1/3 of the territory. "The Christmas ceasefire" is holding. The talks in Bruxelles produced no results, except that the three sided confirmed the Christmas ceasefire.	<i>International Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>
44	18-19 Jan 1994  Geneva	The peace talks on the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina resumed in Geneva. They were attended by the Presidents of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro - Franjo Tuđman, Slobodan Milošević and Momir Bulatović - and Alija Izetbegović, the leader of the Bosnian Muslims, Radovan Karadžić, President of the Republic of Srpska, Prime Minister Haris Silajdžić and Mile Akmadžić, the leader of the Croatian delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several bilateral talks between delegations were held, but no progress was made. After separate talks between the delegations of Yugoslavia and Croatia, that were attended by Presidents Tuđman, Milošević and Bulatović and the Foreign Ministers of these countries, Vladislav Jovanović and Mate Granić, a joint statement was signed about the normalisation of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Croatia and the opening of diplomatic	<i>International Peace Conference on Yugoslavia</i>

		<p>missions between the two states in Belgrade and Zagreb.</p> <p>The Republic of Srpska and the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna signed in Geneva a joint statement about permanent peace and the establishment of official relations between the two republics. Nikola Koljević, Vice-president of the Republic of Srpska, and Mile Akmadžić, the leader of the Croatian delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina, signed the statement.</p>	
45	<p>01 Nov 1995 Dayton</p>	<p>Peace talks about Bosnia and Herzegovina started at Wright-Patterson air base in Dayton, Ohio. Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman, President of Bosnia and Herzegovina Alija Izetbegović and Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević take part in them together with representatives of the Contact Group and the EU. According to the US State Secretary, the conditions for permanent peace are the integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a resolution of the human rights issue, including the responsibility for war crimes, a resolution of the status of Sarajevo and reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, Baranya and Western Syrmia. The negotiators will be introduced to the draft of the general peace agreement consisting of separate documents on territorial issues, disengagement of forces, ceasefire, constitution and elections as well as the issue of refugees and reconstruction. (HINA, Baza EVA, 1 November 1995)</p>	<p><i>Peace talks on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dayton, Ohio, USA</i></p>

46 .	02 Nov 1995  Dayton	Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević and Croatia's President Franjo Tuđman met in Dayton, with US State Secretary Warren Christopher acting as intermediary. In their joint statement, both Presidents agreed to fully contribute to the normalisation of relations between the two countries. The normalisation of relations will be based on "the acknowledgement of the internationally recognised human rights of all citizens, the right of refugees and displaced persons in both countries to return to their homes, to restitution of property or to just compensation." The statement also says that the basis for the normalisation of relations will also be "the support to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Eastern Slavonia, Baranya and Western Syrmia that should take effect as soon as possible based on negotiations between the Croatian Government and the representatives of the local Serbs."	<i>Peace talks on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dayton, Ohio, USA</i>
47 .	20 Nov 1995  Dayton	After 21-day negotiations held at Wright-Patterson air base in Dayton (Ohio, USA), Presidents Alija Izetbegović, Franjo Tuđman and Slobodan Milošević initialled a global peace agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Dayton Peace Accord on Bosnia and Herzegovina enables the existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina as integral state based on the full respect of its sovereignty by the neighbouring countries.  The parties agreed about a constitution granting the establishment of federal institutions, a two-house parliament and a constitutional court consisting of nine judges, three of which shall be appointed by the President of the	<i>Peace talks on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dayton, Ohio, USA</i>

		<p>European Human Rights Court. Based on this Agreement, the country will have its central bank and a single currency. The central government of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall have competence in foreign policy, foreign trade, customs policy, immigration policy, monetary policy, international law, communications, traffic and the financing of government operations and commitments. The two-house parliament shall consist of 15 members of the Council of Peoples and of 42 deputies in the House of Representatives. Two-thirds of all deputies in each Chamber shall be from the Federation. The Presidency shall consist of three members, one of which shall be a representative of the Republic of Srpska and the other two of the Federation. Besides the Presidency, the Council of Ministers shall also constitute executive power. The Federation shall govern 51% of the territory. Sarajevo has become united by way of the Agreement. It is within the Federation, but it shall be open to all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (HINA, Baza EVA, 20 November 1995)</p>	
48	<p>14 Dec 1995 Paris</p>	<p>“The Dayton Accords signing ceremony began in the Elysee Palace in Paris as French President Jacques Chirac gave his welcoming address.</p> <p>Presidents Franjo Tuđman, Alija Izetbegović and Slobodan Milošević were the first to sign the general framework agreement. Presidents Chirac and Clinton, Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany, British and Russian Prime Ministers John Major and Victor Chernomydin, and Spanish Prime</p>	<p><i>Peace talks on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dayton, Ohio, USA</i></p>

		<p>Minister Felipe Gonzales on behalf of the European Union signed the document as co-signatories thereafter.</p> <p>After the signing ceremony, each of the signatories, including OIC, the UN and NATO representatives, delivered short speeches. According to the protocol, the first to speak was President Alija Izetbegović, after him President Milošević and finally President Tuđman. Speeches were then delivered by UN Secretary Butros Butros Gali, General Secretary of NATO Javier Solana, European intermediary Carl Bildt, Prime Minister of Morocco Abdellatif Filali, who is presiding over the OIC contact group and finally by Prime Ministers Chernomydin, Major and Gonzales, Chancellor Kohl and President Clinton." (HINA, Baza EVA, 14 December 1995).</p>	
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We can classify these meeting into two groups depending on their type and "sponsors": a) before the internationalisation of the Yugoslav crisis and b) after its internationalisation.

Before the internationalisation of the Yugoslav crisis, i.e. before the international community became involved of in the resolution of the Yugoslav crisis, Presidents Tuđman and Milošević had 13 meetings:

- 1 meeting about the crisis in the SFRY between the Croatian and Serbian delegations in Belgrade;
- 2 meetings between the SFRY Presidency and the Presidents of the Yugoslav republics;
- 2 meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević (Karađorđevo, Tikveš)
- 2 meetings between Presidents Tuđman, Milošević and Izetbegović (Split, Belgrade);
- 6 meetings between the Presidents of the Yugoslav republics.

After the internationalisation of the Yugoslav crisis Presidents Tuđman and Milošević met 35 times during the meetings organised by international intermediaries:

- 2 meetings on the initiative of Presidents of foreign states (President Mitterand in Paris and President Gorbachev in Moscow);
- 11 meetings organised by the Peace Conference on Yugoslavia which had a dual approach<sup>5</sup>: a political one, aiming to find a political solution and reach a political settlement (7 meetings), and the other, dealing with military aspects in the field (5 meetings);
- Presidents Tuđman and Milošević were invited to 7 meetings related to the political aspect of the Peace Conference on Yugoslavia together with other Presidents of the Yugoslav republics and the federal leadership;
- Presidents Tuđman and Milošević and General Kadijević took part in the 5 meetings dealing with military issues together with Conference Co-chairman Lord Carrington (or Cyrus Vance).
- There were 18 meetings organised by the International Peace Conference on the former Yugoslavia (Co-chairmen Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance; Thorvald Stoltenberg replaced Vance as of May 1993). The leaders of all Yugoslav republics and the SFRY Government participated in this Conference at first. As the Conference focused mostly on the crisis in the Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Presidents of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) were also invited besides the three warring sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Presidents Alija Izetbegović and Slobodan Milošević did not always accept invitations for different reasons, unlike the Croatian side who never refused to co-operate with the international community.
- 4 meetings during the peace negotiations on Bosnia and Herzegovina in Dayton, Ohio. (We singled out the meetings at the beginning of the peace negotiations, 1 November 1995; a meeting between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević with US Foreign Secretary Warren Christopher acting as intermediary, 2 November 1995; a meeting where the agreement on the normalisation relations between Croatia and Yugoslavia /Serbia and Montenegro/ was reached; the end of the peace negotiations when the agreements were initialled, 20 November 1995; and the signing of the peace agreement in the presence of

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<sup>5</sup> See: M. Libal, *German Policy and Yugoslav Crisis 1991-1992*, Golden Marketing –Tehnička knjiga, Zagreb, 2004, p. 84.



all participants and representatives of the international community in Paris on 14 December 1995).

This is a short review of the 48 "half-crazy" and "absurd" meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević, during which "Bosnia was partitioned" without the Muslims being present. According to Mesić, everybody could see that on TV as well.

What the media also showed, were the following facts:

- out of 48 meetings which Mesić is trying to describe as bilateral meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević, only two were bilateral indeed, i.e. between the two of them only (at Karađorđevo and Tikveš); all others were multilateral;
- all meetings prior to the internationalisation of the Yugoslav crisis were held on the recommendation of the SFRY Presidency in order to find a solution to the Yugoslav crisis. First, bilateral meetings took place with each delegation holding a separate meeting with every other delegation, and then joint meetings between the Presidents of all Yugoslav republics; this refers to the meetings between Tuđman and Milošević<sup>6</sup> as well as to the tripartite meetings between Izetbegović, Milošević and Tuđman;
- all meetings after the internationalisation of the Yugoslav crisis were organised by the international community; it were Presidents Tuđman and Milošević who most frequently attended those meetings besides other representatives of the interested parties;
- President Alija Izetbegović<sup>7</sup> participated in at least 31 of the 48 meetings where Presidents Tuđman and Milošević met;
- out of 48 meetings at which, according to Mesić, "Bosnia was partitioned" by Tuđman and Milošević, Stjepan Mesić attended at least four;
- all 48 meetings were open to public and the public was well informed about them by means of joint communiqués, press conferences, agreements signed or other statements;

A serious politician and analyst would take on a task to present before The Hague Tribunal political options of the

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<sup>6</sup> From January until the end of March 1991, all Presidents of the Yugoslav republics held meetings on the each- -with-every-other basis. In this way, Izetbegović and Milošević also met at Karađorđevo and Tikveš.

<sup>7</sup> It is not quite clear from the available sources whether Izetbegović attended another three meetings; as irrelevant for an overall analysis, it remains to be checked subsequently.

adversaries in the former Yugoslavia and their strategies and to assess what was going on at international conferences on the resolution of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and Croatia, and later on in Bosnia and Herzegovina, from 1991 until 1995. However, Mesić missed that chance. All he did say about these developments was that Milošević should be hanged and that Tuđman pursued “a dual policy” because he wanted “the partition of Bosnia”, and that their 48 meetings were “half-crazy” and “absurd”.

It is obvious that The Hague’s Prosecutor Office was not interested in getting from Mesić a political overview of the developments in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Perhaps, the Prosecutor’s Office deemed that Mesić was not able to give such overview. All that they needed from him, being “an important political figure in the history of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and in the Croatian politics”<sup>8</sup>, was his statement in which he accused the Croatian policy of having been a criminal organisation that carried out the criminal enterprise not only in Croatia, but also in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is not our task to present here different political options and strategies during the negotiations on the resolution of the Yugoslav crisis. What lies in the focus of our interest is the “context” Mesić testified about. Mesić described the context of “the partition of Bosnia” as 48 “absurd” meetings.

Instead of describing what was going on during those meetings, we will show what could have happened, had President Tuđman not attended them.

It is quite obvious from their chronology, that the meetings were not arranged for the two Presidents to make arrangements about the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The outcomes of at least some of those meetings prove it.

- a. The first and second round<sup>9</sup> of the talks between the Presidents of the Yugoslav republics, in the first half of 1991, produced no results that might lead to a peaceful solution of the Yugoslav crisis. However, the participants agreed that referendums should be called as a condition for separation. Based on the referendum held in May 1991, Republic of Croatia

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<sup>8</sup> By using these words Prosecutor M. Harmon introduced S. Mesić as witness (Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 march 1998).

<sup>9</sup> Bilateral and then multilateral talks between the Presidents of the Yugoslav republics.

was able to proclaim its independence. Had no agreement on the referendum, as the procedure enabling separation, been reached, the Federal Government and the SFRY Presidency would have had a legal ground to seek its annulment and not to recognise the result of the Croatian referendum.

The Peace Conference on Yugoslavia had a dual approach. With regard to its political aspects, the Republic of Croatia accepted and met all political requirements that were imposed as a condition for her international recognition. Had she not done so, the Republic of Croatia would not have been recognised. Slobodan Milošević, i.e. Serbia and Montenegro, did not accept the international norms and rules. That is why sanctions were applied against them and they were excluded from international organisations.

- b. By accepting the negotiations related to the military aspects of the Peace Conference on Yugoslavia, i.e. the negotiations which Lord Carrington conducted with Presidents Milošević and Tuđman and General Kadijević, Croatia saw the YPA pulling out of Croatia. Without this agreement, Croatia would have been faced with an armed conflict with the YPA on an even larger scale spreading over most of her territory. Its consequences would probably have been long-lasting as it would claim numerous lives and cause massive-scale destruction.
- c. By participating in the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Croatian delegations (from Croatia and consisting of the Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina alike) signed all peace agreements (Vance-Owen Peace Plan, Owen-Stoltenberg Peace Plan<sup>10</sup>), while other delegations rejected them. Although these plans did not lead to the resolution of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they served as a basis for Washington Agreements.
- d. The Washington Agreements ended the conflict between the Croats and Bosniacs as well as the ethnic cleansing of the Croats in Central Bosnia. Had Croatia not signed them, this would not have happened.

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<sup>10</sup> As well as the first peace plan, known as Cuttillero's Plan of March 1992.

- e. Without the Washington Agreements having been signed, Croatia would not have been able to demand that the UNPROFOR mandate be separated, i.e. to have a separate UN mission for the Republic of Croatia (UNCRO)<sup>11</sup>. The separation of the mandate of the UN troops for Croatia enabled military operations to be carried out easier. These operations resulted in the liberation of the occupied parts of the Croatian territory.
- f. Had there been no Flash and Storm Operations, the Dayton Peace Accords would never have taken place.

The results of President Tuđman's participation in the 48 meetings, that Mesić perceived as "half-crazy" and "absurd", were that the Republic of Croatia was able to declare her independence and sovereignty, that the YPA had to pull out of Croatia and that the peace agreements were signed which ended the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is a fact that President Milošević attended those meetings as well, besides other participants, and that Izetbegović and even Mesić attended them, too.

It is also a fact that Mesić wants to show these meetings as "half-crazy" and "absurd" bilateral meetings between Tuđman and Milošević only.

Based on Mesić's statements about these meetings, we can assume that Mesić, had he been in President Tuđman's shoes, would not have attended the talks.

This implies that there would be no "partitioning of Bosnia", because Yugoslavia would remain "whole" and "integral", but also that there would be no independent Croatia recognised as such by the international community.

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11 Those who advocate a thesis about Croatia's dual policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina should draw a conclusion from the fact that Croatia demanded a separate mandate of UN forces for the Republic of Croatia. This, too, confirms that there was no dual policy. Had there been any, it would be easier to redraw the borders in an area where there was no limitation even for UNPROFOR actions.

**3. "There could be no agreement with Milošević as long as I preside over the Parliament, because I said that he should hang "**

According to Mesić's testimony, Presidents Tuđman and Milošević held 48 meetings about "the partition of Bosnia" from which Mesić was excluded. In spite of that, Mesić claims that he was an obstacle to the agreement between Tuđman and Milošević to divide Bosnia by the end of 1993 as well as at the beginning of 1994. That is why President Tuđman wanted to remove him from the Parliament, so that he "could strike a deal with Milošević in a month":

*After the meeting at Karađorđevo, I was excluded from the talks on Bosnia. In December 1993, Tuđman called me to his office and told me that I hampered his arrangements with Milošević concerning Bosnia, because I had told that Milošević should hang. Tuđman told me that he could strike a deal with Milošević on Bosnia in a month. He told me to go to Spa, Belgium. He also told me to start learning French so that I could be ambassador to France or Switzerland. I could not declare in public that I was going to study French, because I was elected to Parliament. I told Tuđman that I would take a month off. In January 1994, I took holiday indeed. I said that I was on sick-leave and on holiday.<sup>12</sup>*

Source: Statement by Stjepan Mesić to Hague's investigators, 19 April 1997, enclosed.

Neither the Prosecutor nor the Tribunal in its Judgements paid attention to logical contradictions in Mesić's testimony. Mesić claims that the agreement "to divide Bosnia" was reached at Karađorđevo in March 1991, but he also claims that, in December 1993, Tuđman told him "that he could strike a deal with Milošević in a month": Moreover, after having been on sick-leave/holiday for a month, in January 1994, Mesić claims that "a month should have been enough to strike a deal with Milošević". The logical conclusion based on Mesić's statement should be - even at the beginning of 1994, no agreement "to divide Bosnia" was reached between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević and, that they did not manage to reach such an agreement either at Karađorđevo or

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<sup>12</sup> Further: "When I came back, I wrote to Tuđman. Tuđman's secretary Zdravka Bušić called me to tell me that Tuđman wanted to speak with me. When we met, he told me that I did not do as I had promised. I told him that I had promised to go away for a month only and, that a month should have been enough to strike a deal with Milošević".

during their 48 meetings. They did not manage, because Mesić himself was an obstacle to such an arrangement.

Stjepan Mesić also repeated his testimony from 1997, when he testified in The Hague again in 1998 – that he was removed from his office as President of the House of Representatives due to the pressure Milošević exerted on President Tuđman by the end of 1993, so that the two of them could strike “a deal on Bosnia”. Mesić said explicitly that President Tuđman wanted Mesić to resign his office as Parliamentary President because “there could be no agreement with Milošević as long as I preside over the Parliament”:

*I was for a unified Bosnia-Herzegovina, but as a senior official I could not directly clash, though it could have been seen from my interviews, so that President Tuđman, in December 1993, proposed that I should resign my post as Speaker of Parliament, that I should go to Grenoble or Spa for a couple of months, Spa in Belgium, for additional study of the French language, and to choose whatever ambassadorial post I wanted, because he could not come to any kind of agreement with Milošević while I was at the head of Parliament, because I said that he had to hang.*

*Namely, this was something I told Milošević in his face, that the Serbs would hang him at the main square in Belgrade, at Terazije, when they failed to achieve their wartime goals, which he had advocated, because he had planned the war.*

*I also asked him, when hanging to think of me, and that I would think of him. I stated that in public, but obviously this bothered him so much that he must have pressured Tuđman to remove me from this high position and after some time, I actually did leave.*

Source: Case no IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998

Furthermore, Mesić claims that he was on sick-leave/holiday for a month and that he said to President Tuđman on his return:

*I told him that I had promised to go away for a month only and that a month should have been enough to strike a deal with Milošević”.*

Source: Statement by Stjepan Mesić to Hague investigators, 19 April 1997, enclosed.

It is a fact that Mesić was an obstacle to reaching an agreement about Bosnia and Herzegovina, but not with Milošević. This can be concluded even without thorough political analyses, but by looking at the overview of the meetings between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević instead.

In December 1993, two meetings were held, in January 1994 only one. All three of them were organised by the Peace Conference on the former Yugoslavia.

*22 December 1993. The Presidents of Serbia and Croatia, Milošević and Tuđman, and the representatives of the three warring sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Karadžić, Boban and Izetbegović participated in the Peace Conference in Geneva.*

*23 December 1993. EU Ministers and the Co-chairmen of the International Peace Conference on the Former Yugoslavia met with Presidents Tuđman, Bulatović, Milošević and Izetbegović as well as with Karadžić and Boban.*

*18 – 19 January 1994. The peace talks on the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina resumed in Geneva. They were attended by the Presidents of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro - Franjo Tuđman, Slobodan Milošević and Momir Bulatović - and Alija Izetbegović, the leader of the Bosnian Muslims, Radovan Karadžić, President of the Republic of Srpska, Prime Minister Haris Silajdžić and Mile Akmađić, the leader of the Croatian delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina. After separate talks between the delegations of Yugoslavia and Croatia, that were attended by Presidents Tuđman, Milošević and Bulatović and the Foreign Ministers of these two countries, Vladislav Jovanović and Mate Granić, a joint statement was signed about the normalisation of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Croatia and the opening of diplomatic missions between the two states in Belgrade and Zagreb.<sup>13</sup>*

Therefore, there could be no bilateral negotiations or agreements "about Bosnia", because Alija Izetbegović attended all three meetings. All three sides from Bosnia and Herzegovina attended them, besides the Co-chairmen of the International Conference and the EU Foreign Ministers. Moreover, in January 1994, the last meeting between Presidents Tuđman and Milošević took place, because the negotiations on Bosnia and Herzegovina organised by the

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<sup>13</sup> ibid. The table showing the 48 meetings.

Peace Conference on the Former Yugoslavia ended with no results. The two of them will meet again in two years time, in Dayton in 1995.

That is why both Mesić's statements are false. The one about the Serbs and Croats partitioning Bosnia and Herzegovina without the Bosniacs in January 1994, as well as the one about Milošević requesting from President Tuđman to remove Mesić from his office as Parliamentary President.

*...both you and I watched in January 1994 meetings between representatives of Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks in Geneva, and when they were sitting around a map, Franjo Tuđman, Karadžić, Boban and Milošević were standing to the side and they were reviewing these maps, what would belong to whom without the Muslims.*

*I correct myself – only the Serbs and Croats were present, the Muslims were not there. This was in January 1994. This was broadcast on television. I was flabbergasted because I understood what this meant."*

Source: Case no IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998.

In January 1994, the Peace Conference on the Former Yugoslavia ended its work with no results, instead of resulting in the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina between the Serbs and Croats.

Another agreement was reached between Belgrade and Zagreb on 18 – 19 January 1994, when a joint statement was signed about the normalisation of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Croatia and about the opening of diplomatic missions between the two countries. In this way, if he insists on his view that he was an obstacle to reaching an agreement between Tuđman and Milošević, Mesić could only have been an obstacle to reaching an agreement about the normalisation of relations between the two states.

The reason why Milošević agreed to normalisation of relations with Croatia was not because an agreement about Bosnia was reached between Belgrade and Zagreb. Quite the opposite, an agreement "about Bosnia" was reached between Presidents Tuđman and Izetbegović.

Nevertheless, the foregoing arguments against Mesić's statements are formal by their nature. Yet, they alone refute his ill-founded statements. The true indicators of the events in that period are even more devastating for Mesić's statements,



especially in the light of the fact that Mesić, as Parliamentary President, was well informed about negotiations with Izetbegović and the Bosniacs that were conducted in order to end the armed conflict between the Bosniacs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina and find a permanent solution for the constitutional system of government in that country. Let us be reminded about the most important proposals and agreements<sup>14</sup> from the period during which Mesić was allegedly "an obstacle" to an agreement between Tuđman and Milošević.

The secret agreement about confederation signed by the President of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, and the President of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović, "to develop the relations between the Bosnian Muslim republic and the Croatian republic within the Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina in all spheres with a view to creating a common state that shall simultaneously build up confederal relations with the Republic of Croatia" (Geneva, 14 September 1993).

President Tuđman's peace initiative with a proposal for a permanent and peaceful solution for the territory of the former Yugoslavia (Zagreb, 2 November 1993).

The Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haris Silajdžić, and the Vice-president of the Croatian Government and Foreign Minister, Mate Granić, signed a Joint Declaration (Sarajevo, 12 November 1993) in order to reach a comprehensive agreement about military and humanitarian issues.

The contractual agreement to bring about permanent peace between the Croatian and the Muslim Bosniac peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina and about the bases for their future co-existence (Bonn, 10 January 1994); President Tuđman's proposal which Izetbegović thought favourably of, although he did not sign it.

The Proposal for the Declaration presented to the Muslim Bosniac delegation at the Peace Conference on the former Yugoslavia by the Croatian delegation (Geneva, 19 January 1994). The first three Declaration items are:

*All military conflicts between the Croats and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina shall end immediately to enable*

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<sup>14</sup> Documents and excerpts from documents have been quoted from the book: M. Tuđman, *The Truth about Bosnia and Herzegovina, Documents 1991-1995 (Istina o Bosni i Hercegovini, Dokumenti 1991-1995)*, Slovo M, Zagreb, 2005

*the implementation of the agreement on safe passage of convoys and on other humanitarian issues.*

*Should a Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina consisting of three republics be established, as proposed by the Conference on the former Yugoslavia, we propose that the Union build up con-federal relations with the Republic of Croatia pursuant to President Tuđman's proposal of 10 January 1994 and President Izetbegović's response of 15 January 1994.*

*Should, for any reason, the establishment of a Union consisting of three republics fail, we propose that a confederation between the Muslim Bosniac Republic and the Republic of Croatia be established.*

These documents as well as the efforts made to implement permanent peace show that it took "several months" for President Tuđman to reach "an agreement about Bosnia", however not with Milošević as Mesić claimed, but with Izetbegović. Within these few months President Tuđman provided a basis for the Washington Agreements to be signed in March 1994. These Agreements based on "the secret agreement" of 14 September 1993, the Contractual Agreement (Bonn, 10 January 1994) and the Declaration of 19 January 1994.

It is a fact that these initiatives and the foregoing proposals by President Tuđman led to the Washington negotiations and Agreements during March 1994. These were the proposals that were, in December 1993 and January 1994, presented as "an agreement about Bosnia" to the Bosniacs, not to Milošević. These proposals were made on the Croatian initiative for the Bosniacs to accept them. Suppressing facts about the efforts of the Croatian policy to achieve peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is what makes Mesić a perjurer before The Hague Tribunal. He did not suppress these facts out of ignorance, but for the sake of his personal political ambition.

#### **4. "Mr. President, I will never be against the HDZ policy and your leadreship"**

What Mesić did not mention when testifying before The Hague Tribunal is his role in attempts to overthrow President Tuđman by the end of 1993 and at the beginning of 1994. The Manolić-Mesić faction within the HDZ played a key role in it. Mesić was one of the key players and motives behind his

conversations with President Tuđman in December 1993 and January 1994 where quite different from the ones he told about. They certainly had nothing to do with Milošević and "a deal about Bosnia". By these conversations, President Tuđman tried once more to save the unity of the HDZ in order to avoid splits in the party and a parliamentary crisis.

The attempts to provoke a parliamentary crisis in the spring of 1994 failed. There were no major splits and disturbances in the HDZ. The attempt to overthrow President Tuđman ended in a total defeat of Mesić and Manolić and led to their final break with the HDZ. This was confirmed in the message about "the attempts to provoke a split in the HDZ" that the HDZ Presidency sent to HDZ members and the Croatian public on 24 April 1994:

*The initiative by Mr. J. Manolić and Mr. S. Mesić to found a new political party, which they called the Independent Croatian Democrats, marks the end of their departure from the HDZ Programme and policy. Their departure from the mainstream policy of the HDZ has been going on for more than a year and it speeded up after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convention of the HDZ from 15 to 16 October last year.<sup>15</sup>*

The HDZ Presidency established that the process leading to the break of Mr. Manolić and Mr. Mesić with the HDZ had been taking place for more than a year and that it intensified after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Party Convention in October 1993. Academician Aralica described four stages of their plan to cause a split in the HDZ and provoke a parliamentary crisis,<sup>16</sup> with regard to the dynamics of developments, methods of political struggle and slogans that were used. One of the players involved in those events was Stjepan Mesić, although he stayed in the background at first.

During the first stage, Manolić and Mesić were busy preparing the public for the crisis with the help of a part of the

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15 Look for the message by the HDZ Presidency under the title "No one has the right to put the country to jeopardy" in: *ZNA SE, The HDZ' Contribution to Strengthening the Sovereignty of the Croatian State (HDZ u borbi za učvršćivanje hrvatske državne suverenosti)* by Franjo Tuđman, Ph.D., Secretariat General of the HDZ Headquarters, Zagreb, p. 113.

16 Academician Ivan Aralica rendered a detailed account of the attempts to provoke a parliamentary crisis. At that time, he was a Vice-President of the House of Counties of the Croatian Parliament and was therefore, familiar with the situation. His analysis of the events was published in *Vjesnik* by the end of September and at the beginning of October 1994. Since he is a credible witness of those developments, we used his analysis and assessments, although we presented the periods related to the parliamentary crisis in a somewhat different way.

press, tabloids mostly. The message they were trying to sent was that “it is possible to seize power and overthrow Tuđman and the HDZ even before the election by causing a split in the HDZ between the right and left wing, whereby the left wing would encourage the technocrats to join them”.<sup>17</sup> In this way, the crisis would be transferred to the Parliament, where the HDZ defectors and the opposition would form the majority.

The call to overthrow President Tuđman and the HDZ Government according to the foregoing scenario was formulated in “the letter from a group of six”. It was an open letter to the President of the Republic of Croatia, Dr Franjo Tuđman, that was published just before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convention of the HDZ.<sup>18</sup> Its authors requested from President Tuđman to resign. Manolić and Mesić were not among the six authors of the letter, but they ordered it: “... it is highly likely that Manolić was the initiator of “the letter from a group of six”, one of those who ordered it and arranged that it be published before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convention of the HDZ when many people believed that there would be a split in the HDZ.”<sup>19</sup>

However, during the second stage, at the 2<sup>nd</sup> HDZ Convention, no split in the HDZ occurred. Neither the left wing nor the right wing won, but President Tuđman’s mainstream policy instead. In his speech, he called both, the left and the right wing to put up their candidates for the president of the HDZ: “... I would have Šeks as a right-wing candidate... and Mesić or Manolić as left-wing candidates ... then we will see how strong the left and the right wing really are”.

At the Convention, “there were 21 candidates for five Party vice-presidents, 31 for five Presidency members and 6 candidates for the general secretary.” President Tuđman pleaded not to choose “those who engaged in in-fighting ... on whom not only the opposition, but also all kinds of schemers abroad counted as being capable of causing a split and a shift to the left or the right”. He pleaded for “his” candidates in order to elect such inner leadership “no one could object to” and that would be acceptable “to the Croatian

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17 I. Aralica, *Vjesnik*, September/October 1994.

18 The letter was published on 20 September 1993 and among those who signed it were Ivo Banac, Krsto Cviić, Slavko Goldstein, Vlado Gotovac, Vesna Pusić and Ozren Žunec. (see: I. Aralica, What did I say about Bosnia (*Što sam rekao o Bosni*), PIP Pavičić, Zagreb, 1995, p.128-130.)

19 I. Aralica, *ibid.* *Vjesnik*, 1994.

people and to the world". However, "neither Mesić nor Šeks ... have to be ...members of the inner leadership".<sup>20</sup>

The initiators of the split in the HDZ, Josip Manolić and Stjepan Mesić, failed to achieve their goals at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convention of the HDZ of October 1993. Moreover, they became political losers as they were not elected to the inner Party leadership. This meant that their political careers were past their peaks, although they were still holding high offices: Josip Manolić was President of the House of Counties of the Croatian Parliament and Stjepan Mesić President of the House of Representatives of the Croatian Parliament.

In the third stage, which followed after their fiasco at the HDZ Convention, Manolić and Mesić transferred the crisis from the party to the Croatian parliament. In spite of the promises they made to the opposition and the general public, they did not manage to undermine the HDZ' majority in neither of the Parliament Houses. Moreover, it turned out that the few HDZ deputies who followed them were neither the left nor the right wing, let alone technocrats, but a group of people lacking vision who were dissatisfied with their position within the HDZ".<sup>21</sup>

Even under such circumstances, before Manolić's and Mesić's final break with the HDZ, President Tuđman tried to preserve the unity of the HDZ, although he knew that only a few deputies in both Parliament Houses would follow Manolić and Mesić. At the joint meeting of the HDZ Presidency and the HDZ Club of Deputies, that was held on 25 January 1994 in the Croatian Parliament, the President of the HDZ and of the Republic of Croatia spoke of "the attempts to provoke a constitutional crisis" and "a split " in the HDZ. He emphasised in his speech:

*I am pleased to say this: I talked to Stipe Mesić and explained to him that he encouraged them, the adversaries of the HDZ in the country and abroad, who do not want this, but some other Croatia, to count on him as the President of the Parliament, and that they want to use him and send him, therefore, invitations to Sarajevo and Kuala*

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20 Franjo Tuđman, Ph.D., *ZNA SE, The HDZ' Contribution to Strengthening the Sovereignty of the Croatian State (HDZ u borbi za učvršćivanje hrvatske državne suverenosti)* ., Secretariat General of the HDZ Headquarters, Zagreb, 1995; The Speech at the 2nd Convention of the HDZ in Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall, Zagreb, 15 October 1993, p. 35-39.

21 I. Aralica, *ibid.* Vjesnik, 1994

*Lumpur. Mesić told me: "Mr. President, I will never be against the HDZ policy and your leadership".*<sup>22</sup>

Mesić never denied the words President Tuđman spoke before the deputies in the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia. He also never claimed that President Tuđman misinterpreted their conversation, until he put that conversation into a quite different context before The Hague Tribunal. Nevertheless, he did not explain before The Hague Tribunal the context of "the invitation to Sarajevo". On 7 February, the Croatian People's Council of the Assembly of the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina was founded in Sarajevo. The Council, that based its programme on an indivisible and decentralised Bosnia and Herzegovina, announced that its delegation would participate in the next Geneva negotiations on Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>23</sup>

As we already mentioned, in February 1994, the draft of the solution for the system of government for Bosnia and Herzegovina, that would be specified by the Washington Agreements, was already agreed on. Had the delegation of the Croatian People's Council subsequently joined the international talks, the position of the official Croatian policy would have been weakened. Mesić's presence at the founding assembly of the Croatian People's Council in his capacity as the President of the Croatian Parliament would have sent a wrong message to the Croatian and the international public, because the Council was an opposition to the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>24</sup> That is why the President requested from the President of the Parliament not to accept the invitation to Sarajevo and to resign from his office. It was because his faction did not enjoy the support from the HDZ majority and he could no longer represent it in the Parliament.<sup>25</sup>

As President Tuđman never wanted to reject the people he worked with and, since he wanted to keep all state-building political options within the HDZ, he offered Mesić to choose

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22 Franjo Tuđman, Ph.D., *ZNA SE, The HDZ' Contribution to Strengthening the Sovereignty of the Croatian State (HDZ u borbi za učvršćivanje hrvatske državne suverenosti)*., Secretariat General of the HDZ Headquarters, Zagreb, 1995; The Speech at the Joint meeting of the HDZ Presidency and the HDZ Club of Deputies, that was held on 25 January 1994 in the Croatian Parliament, p. 84.

23 HINA, Baza EVA, 7 February 1994.

24 Those who advocated the policy of the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina often referred to the members of the Croatian People's Council as "Alija's Croats".

25 I can testify about it from first-hand knowledge, because the President told me personally about this conversation with Stjepan Mesić.

an ambassadorial post for himself and to remain, in this way, in the Party and a part of the official policy. Mesić's story about Milošević requesting his removal from office, because he presented an obstacle to the final agreement on Bosnia was meant to deceive. On the one hand, he wanted to conceal how disloyal he was to the policy he was a part of and, which he obstructed secretly in order to overthrow President Tuđman and provoke a parliamentary crisis. On the other hand, by claiming that at the beginning 1994, he was still a key political figure, an obstacle to Presidents Tuđman and Milošević alike, he wanted to attach importance to himself before the Tribunal.

President Tuđman's political offer to Josip Manolić and Stjepan Mesić was made public in 1994 already. He talked about it personally and the press wrote about it in detail from 1994 onward. In spite of the fact that they lost at the Party Convention by secret ballot and that they did not win the majority support in the Croatian Parliament, President Tuđman offered to Josip Manolić, who initiated his overthrow "to stay in the Party and have his faction and to fight for his views within the party". The President offered to Mesić and Manolić to have their faction within the HDZ and to stay in the HDZ<sup>26</sup>. They rejected his offer, went on to provoke the parliamentary crisis and lost. The account of those events, that Mesić gave in The Hague, is insincere and false and highly hypocritical, politically speaking.

At the beginning of 1994, his only political asset was his office as President of the House of Representatives of the Croatian Parliament. But even this did not belong to him, but to the Party that appointed him. To compensate for the loss of that political asset and for the loss of power, which he found very hard<sup>27</sup>, he gave false testimony and ignored the truth when testifying before The Hague Tribunal.

In the fourth stage of their attempts to provoke a parliamentary crisis, the HDZ defectors, who joined the opposition together with Manolić and Mesić, could not jeopardise the HDZ majority in neither of the Houses of the Croatian Parliament. They could not unite the opposition as they provided no basis for a joint political platform. They could neither agree on the distribution of the seats in the Parliament nor on the new rules of procedure. Mesić and Manolić could not retain their offices as Presidents of the House of Representatives or the House of Counties, although they did

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26 I. Aralica, *ibid.*, Vjesnik 1994.

27 Case no IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić from 16 to 19 March 1998.

not allow that the vote of no confidence in the Houses be called for.<sup>28</sup>

On 23 May 1994, the House of Counties of the Croatian Parliament relieved Josip Manolić from his posit and elected Katica Ivanišević as its new president.

On 24 May 1994, the House of Representatives of the Croatian Parliament relieved Stjepan Mesić from his posit and elected Nedjeljko Mihanović as its new president.<sup>29</sup>

The HND – the Croatian Independent Democrats, a party founded by Josip Manolić and Stjepan Mesić, did not manage to win at least one seat in the next 1995 election for the House of Representatives of the Croatian Parliament. The Party also failed to win a seat in the 1997 election for the House of Counties. This indicates clearly that the faction and its leaders did not enjoy the support within the HDZ or of the Croatian voters. It also confirms that the few HDZ deputies who joined them in 1994, did so only because they were dissatisfied with their political status in the party and that their motive was the power struggle.

Mesić did not testify before The Hague Tribunal about those events in the HDZ and about his role in them, so that he could describe his conversations with President Tuđman and his break with him, which followed thereafter, as a conflict over a political program, and not as a mere power struggle.

Mesić also did not testify that, in the critical period that he himself emphasised – in December 1993 – the strongest opposition party drew up “a strategy of political action” with detailed plans to provoke a parliamentary crisis and, “to call an early parliamentary election in July, or in September 1994 at the latest”, in order to overthrow the HDZ. Mesić also did not mention in his testimony before the Tribunal that the activity of his and Manolić’s faction was harmonised with “the strategy of political action” that was based on two assessments: that the conflict between the Croats and Bosniacs in Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue (i.e. “that peace efforts will produce no results”) and about the possibility of reaching an agreement with “the reasonable

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<sup>28</sup> For a more detailed account see I. Aralica *ibid.* Vjesnik, 1994.

<sup>29</sup> A. Mijatović (editor), Ten Years of the Croatian Democratic Union (*Deset godina Hrvatske demokratske zajednice*), memorial edition, Croatian Democratic Union, Zagreb, 1999, p. 180.



faction within the HDZ about the necessity of calling an early parliamentary election".<sup>30</sup>

Mesić also did not mention in his testimony that the internal key document of the opposition party envisaged the period for implementing "the strategy of political action":

- January and February: to promote the idea of an early election; to reach an agreement between the opposition parties and to promote it; to promote the need for a shift in power; to build up the expectations of a victory of the opposition;
- March and April: to choose two or three topics that will strain the relations with the HDZ and to promote in the media the weaknesses of the HDZ and the differences within it; special attention it to be given to the topics such as corruption, crime, abuse of power, lack of care about different social groups etc;
- May and June: the conflict reaches its climax. This will result in walking out of the Parliament in protest, in raising the question of President's responsibility (possibly). The goal is to simulate a governmental crisis. To encourage a divide in the HDZ.

Mesić did not testify about all this. He could not do so, because he would otherwise have to admit that, back then in 1994, he was still loyal to President Tuđman and the HDZ policy in public, while at the same time he was, together with Manolić, secretly working for the opposition and, together with him, greatly contributed to the implementation of "the strategy of political action". Their involvement in this political conspiracy was crucial. Manolić was "a reliable source" giving information about the split in the HDZ to the tabloids. Besides, he initiated "the letter from a group of six", demonised "the Herzegovinian lobby", provoked a conflict about the Party's Christian-Democratic orientation and presented the conflict between the Bosniacs and Croats as inexcusable *magnum crimen*.<sup>31</sup> Together with Mesić, he organised the most important actions that were taken to "simulate a governmental crisis" and to request President Tuđman's resignation.

Although "the strategy of political action" included "many elements of a legal parliamentary struggle" it "also included

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30 "Strategy of Political Action of the Croatian Social Liberal Party until July or September 1994"; a quotation from: I. Aralica, *ibid.*, Vjesnik, 1994.

31 I. Aralica, *ibid.*, Vjesnik, 1994.

many illegal methods or those that were almost illegal and, as such, questionable from the ethical point of view”.<sup>32</sup>

As he testified in The Hague in 1998, Mesić remained loyal to the 1994 strategy goals. However, by suppressing some important facts about the political developments from that period, by his false accounts of his own or President Tuđman’s statements, Mesić revealed his own “dual policy” and how unethical his conduct is. By testifying before The Hague Tribunal, he tried to legalise his own “clandestine policy” from that period based on falsehoods and lies. The Prosecutor’s Office helped him, while The Hague Tribunal, although warned about it, was manipulated.

## 5. P.S. *The Deceived Tribunal*

The Prosecutor’s Office requested a closed session so that Stjepan Mesić might testify as a secret witness. Prosecutor Harmon gave the following explanation of his request: “He believes, Mr. President and the Prosecutor supports him in this belief, that he and his family are at considerable personal risk if his testimony is made public – and if his request to proceed in a closed session is denied.”<sup>33</sup>

The Prosecutor’s statement shows that both, the Prosecutor’s Office and Mesić, feared the possibility that the testimony be made public. The Defence arguments give us reasons to believe that the reasons for their fears were different. As it objected the closed session the Defence warned the Tribunal:

*Everything that Mr Mesić said in his testimony for the Prosecutor has – he has repeated in numerous interviews. I have collected maybe 200 of those interviews. Not a single statement that he made in his statement of the Office of the Prosecutor exists which has not been repeated on innumerable occasions.*<sup>34</sup>

Source: Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić, from 16 to 19 march 1998.

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32 I. Aralica, *ibid*, Vjesnik, 1994.

33 Witness Stjepan Mesić, The Hague, from 16 to 19 March 1998.

34 According to the Prosecutor’s opening statement, Mesić was supposed to confirm in his testimony what he had already stated in writing in his deposition to the Hague’s investigators in 1997. Besides that, the General Blaškić Defence argued: “After his deposition has been published ... Mr. Mesić gave, on two or three occasions. several interviews where he used it as a means of his political struggle”. (Case No IT-95-14-A, testimony by S. Mesić, from 16 to 19 March 1998.)

The Defence had every right to warn the Tribunal: "We are concerned in protecting the integrity of this Tribunal". Because of "... our fear that the politicians may draw the Tribunal into some kind of political manipulations so that the Tribunal may become an instrument in political disputes between political parties in Croatia"<sup>35</sup>.

That is precisely what happened. At the time when he made his statements to the investigators and testified before The Hague Tribunal, in 1997 and 1998, his political significance and reputation in Croatia did not amount to much. He wanted to take advantage of the fact that he was the key witness for the Prosecution, though perhaps not so much against General Blaškić, but rather against the official Croatian policy of the time and against President Tuđman. He succeeded in it, because his testimony served as a basis for new indictments for a criminal enterprise that was carried out by President Tuđman as the head of the criminal organisation.

Therefore, Stjepan Mesić deliberately went to testify in order to be rewarded politically for his testimony not only from President Tuđman's adversaries in Croatia, but also from certain political circles abroad, that were numerous and influential.

The motive for his testimony was not to render an account of political and historical events, to produce facts and information, to refer to new documents or knowledge of crimes within the competence of The Hague Tribunal.<sup>36</sup> The motive for his testimony was to be rewarded politically for the very fact that he testified, and not for what he testified about. Politically, Mesić decided to make the most of the fact that he testified as the Prosecution witness against the official Croatian policy. At the same time, he put in a great deal of effort to conceal the contents of his testimony. It is because he was aware of the fact that he was not telling the truth. But he was trying to conceal this fact as well as the entire contents of his testimony in order not to reveal the means that helped him to achieve his goal.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Based on what we have already pointed to, he testified about nothing new, true or important. When one carefully reads his testimony, he or she may find quite opposite views in it. He claimed that he knew nothing about the meeting at Karađorđevo, but that he heard rumours that an agreement "to divide Bosnia" was reached there. Thereafter, he would say that in January 1994, President Tuđman needed few more months to reach an agreement with Milošević about Bosnia.

Stjepan Mesić does not care about the truth, or even about the lies he told. All he cares about is his goal. Being a political pragmatist and lacking any political convictions of his own, cynical about the values of the people around him, Mesić openly mocked the Prosecutor's Office and The Hague Tribunal at the moment he was confronted with evidence that he was not telling the truth and that he was changing his testimony and views depending on his political ambitions.

***Question: Can we conclude that you did not always tell the truth – it depended on the political objectives of the Party you belonged to?***

***S. Mesić: Only my wife believes that I always tell the truth.***

Source: Case No.IT-95-14-A, testimony by S.Mesić, from 16 until 19 March 1998.

Mesić played the card that enabled his comeback to the political arena as the key Prosecution witness against the official Croatian policy. It was an asset that could not guarantee him success and political comeback still, but presented a kind of political credit granted from players abroad. At the time when Tuđman's policy was a thorn in the flesh of certain international political circles, when President Tuđman's chances of recovery were slim and the ruling party, the HDZ, was about to face in-fighting and a power struggle, Mesić became a rising star supported by the Prosecutor's office and protected by The Hague Tribunal.

Pleased that he played his cards so well, Mesić openly mocked the Prosecutor and the Tribunal alike, as he answered the question as to whether he was telling the truth: "Only my wife believes that I always tell the truth."